



# KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

## NEWS RELEASE

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## **STATE FILES PLAN TO PROVIDE EQUITABLE STUDENT ACCESS TO EFFECTIVE EDUCATORS**

(Frankfort, KY) – The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) has filed a plan with the United States Department of Education (USED) to improve equitable access to effective teachers and leaders for all Kentucky students. All states were required to submit plans by June 1.

Section 1111(b)(8)(C) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) requires that each state's Title I, Part A plan include information on the strategies it will employ to ensure that poor, minority, Limited English Proficient, and special needs students are not taught at higher rates than other children by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers.

While 99.7 percent of Kentucky teachers are identified as highly qualified, new research shows that highly qualified teacher status does not necessarily get to the heart of what makes an excellent teacher. As a result, states across the country are shifting focus to what makes a teacher effective. Kentucky also recognizes how important school leaders are to the continuous improvement process, so the plan includes strategies to address access to effective leaders as well.

"We are committed to improving educational outcomes for all students and in recent years, through our statewide Professional Growth and Effectiveness System, have focused efforts on improving the quality of instruction and leadership across the Commonwealth," Education Commissioner Terry Holliday said. "This plan will allow us to expand upon those efforts and work across state agencies to ensure every child in Kentucky has access to effective teachers and leaders that will maximize the child's learning potential."

During the development of [Kentucky's equity plan](#), stakeholders suggested several root causes for inequities in the current system.

- Teachers are not being prepared to meet the diverse learning needs of all students.
- New and inexperienced teachers are often assigned to work with the most challenging students.
- Screeners are inappropriately used during the hiring process eliminating quality applicants.
- Policies, procedures and contracts are written and implemented in ways that create a revolving door of teachers in high poverty, high minority and the lowest achieving schools.

(more)

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- Working conditions that would improve the culture of the school are not correctly or adequately addressed.
- Administrators are not developing and sustaining a collaborative culture that promotes team work and on-going professional support to improve teaching and learning.
- Leadership opportunities outside the classroom are not available for teachers.

The following strategies were developed to address the root causes and provide more equitable access to effective teachers and leaders statewide:

- improve educator preparation by increasing the amount of training for pre-service teachers; revising and aligning teacher preparation and accreditation programs; revising the Kentucky Teacher Internship Program (KTIP) to align with the state's Professional Growth and Effectiveness System (PGES) for educators; and working with institutions of higher education to align current education practices;
- improve recruitment, hiring and placement of educators by improving district recruitment practices; evaluating statutes, policies and procedures that may contribute to inequitable hiring practices; reviewing local teacher and student assignment policies; increasing teacher pay for recruitment in high need schools; and increasing the pool of teachers equipped to work with diverse learners;
- increase ongoing teacher and principal development by strategically allocating federal funds and reviewing alternative funding streams; developing induction and mentoring programs; implementing a coherent statewide system for professional learning that is aligned with PGES and implemented as a continuous improvement process; and engaging teachers in professional learning experiences that would most impact student achievement; and
- improve educator retention by providing educator career pathway opportunities and improving a collaborative culture through effective school leadership.

The plan includes multiple measures to evaluate progress on equitable access and starting this fall, school and district progress will be publicly reported through Kentucky's online School Report Card. Schools and districts then will use the data to identify needs and set goals for improvement that will be documented in their Comprehensive School Improvement Plans or Comprehensive District Improvement Plans.

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